

MEET TREEMONT'S NEW ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR: AIMEE DUBUISSON

by Lois McCall, Treemont resident

When Treemont Retirement Community's long-time Activities Director Alice Pillsbury announced her up-coming wedding and subsequent retirement, the big question was "Who in the world can replace Alice?" At the moment there was no one in sight, but at just the right moment a new face appeared on the scene and there was an almost immediate sense of "This is so *right!*"



Diminutive Aimee Dubuisson (pronounced Amy Dyoo-bwee-SAWN) was born and raised in New Orleans of French ancestry, but she is as American as the magnolia blossoms she brings to mind. With a riverboat captain for a father and the banks of the Mississippi as her playground, she has many happy memories of the Batchure (space between the levee and the river) and of standing at Christmastime in the warmth of the community bonfire as the crowd awaited the arrival of Pere Noel (Father Christmas in a Santa Claus suit) on his sleigh/barge. She recalls the thrill she felt even as a young child looking back at the city from the Algiers side of the Batchure to see the illuminated steeple of St. Louis Cathedral.

She was educated at the Academy of the Holy Angels, a parochial school for girls only, housed in a building that had been used during the Civil War as barracks by Confederate soldiers. The teachers were of the same order of Maronite nuns as those who had nursed the wounded soldiers in the Infirmary.

After graduation she went to work and then married. Several years later she realized that the marriage was not working out and moved to Houston with her then 4-year old daughter to get a fresh start.

The burgeoning medical community in Houston provided an ideal environment for her business skills combined with her quiet behind-the-scenes efficiency and people skills, and here she found an ideal career as Medical Staff Coordinator, helping doctors staff, set up insurance and other systems, and manage their offices.

When two young neurologists left Baylor for private practice together they asked Aimee to come with them select nurses and set up all the insurance systems and patient records. She says they were brilliant specialists but so young that she sometimes felt almost like a baby-sitter as she supplemented their medical expertise with some sound management principles of which they knew very little if anything.

After eleven years with them she felt ready for retirement, but after retiring she was restless within a short time. She knew that she did not want to go back to the heavy responsibilities and rigorous schedules of managing a medical practice, but she was not quite sure what she wanted to do. For starters she hit on the idea of doing some volunteer work to find her passion for this time of her life.

One day as she passed Treemont on her way to her nearby townhome the thought occurred to her that there might be a need for volunteers to help with the needs of resident seniors. She stopped her car abruptly, turned around, came back and pulled into the parking lot. She knew no one here and had no idea of whom she should approach.

The receptionist was friendly and pleasant. She didn't know of any established program for volunteers; she said, but would ask Alice Pillsbury, the Activities Director. Alice responded that she could always use a volunteer helper and invited her in for a chat.

The rest, as the saying goes, is history. Aimee of course had no idea that Alice was planning to be married the following summer and was contemplating retirement sometime in the foreseeable future. She soon found herself walking in Alice's footsteps one day a week and then several days per week as a part-time staff member. She had found her passion.

Meanwhile with the re-opening of Building A Treemont had entered a boom stage in marketing. With all the new residents applying and moving in there was simply more work than Ann Lawler, Director of Marketing, could handle, even with the addition of Helena Arvanites to the marketing staff.

Management engaged Nancy Barclay as Alice's assistant and transferred Aimee to Marketing. She willingly responded to the need, but her heart was still with activities. As the vacancies were filled and marketing demands settled down to a more normal state, Aimee was delighted to be told that she could go back to activities.

She's not quite sure when she became aware that she was to become Alice's full-time successor as Activities Director, but it finally sank in and she was ready to step into the job when Alice said good-bye at her retirement party on December 20.

During her tenure Alice Pillsbury-Boone had done a monumental job establishing and maintaining an eclectic schedule of entertainment and activities appealing to a variety of interests. There is something to suit just about everyone at Treemonts.

We realize that everything changes in some ways over time, but we look forward to working with Aimee Dubuisson in the spirit of mutual delight in the many

good things Treemont offers and will continue to offer to keep us engaged, active, interested and *interesting*.

Come join us for Treemont Retirement Community's Valentine's Day, Super Bowl and Mardi Gras festivities at 2501 Westerland Dr.(at Westheimer), Houston, TX 77063. Call Aimee to volunteer at 713-783-6820 or aimee@treemont.com.

Welcome, Aimee! Let the good times roll! Or as you might have said in old New Orleans, "Acueillir, Aimee. Laissez les bons temps rouler."